

Message Text

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SUBJECT: RIO GRANDE DE MATAGALPA HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT AT
COPALAR SITE

REF: FAM 947

1. A MAJOR HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT IS NOW IN THE ADVANCED PLANNING STAGES. THE PROJECT, KNOWN AS THE RIO GRANDE DE MATAGALPA HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT AT THE COPALAR SITE, HAS BEEN RUMORED FOR AT LEAST A YEAR BUT DETAILS HAVE ONLY NOW BECOME AVAILABLE. A FEASIBILITY STUDY IS SOON TO GET UNDERWAY, WITH CONSTRUCTION SLATED TO BEGIN IN 1977.

2. AN AMERICAN FIRM, INTERNATIONAL ENGINEERING COMPANY, INC., 220 MONTGOMERY ST., SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94104, PREPARED A STUDY ON NICARAGUA'S ELECTRICITY NEEDS AND POTENTIAL UNDER AN AID CONTRACT. IN THE STUDY, THE ENGINEERING FIRM WAS CHARGED WITH SELECTING THE MOST PROMISING SITE FOR A HYDROELECTRIC DAM. INTERNATIONAL ENGINEERING SELECTED THE COPALAR SITE ON THE RIO GRANDE DE MATAGALPA, APPROXIMATELY 30 KILOMETERS EAST OF THE TOWN OF RIO BLANCO IN THE PROVINCE OF ZELAYA. THIS SITE IS APPARENTLY MOST APPROPRIATE FOR A HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT, AND THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA AND THE NATIONAL LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY (ENALUF) HAVE DECIDED TO PROCEED WITH THE PROJECT.

3. THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA HAS RECEIVED A LOAN FOR SOME THREE MILLION DOLLARS FROM THE ROYAL BANK OF CANADA
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PAGE 02 MANAGU 01005 012259Z

FOR THE FEASIBILITY AND ENGINEERING DESIGN STUDY. A NICARAGUAN

FIRM, NICARAGUA AGRISCIENCE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT CORP.,
WITH A MAJOR PORTION OF THE WORK SUBCONTRACTED TO CANADIAN
INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS MANAGEMENT, A CANADIAN CONSULTING
FIRM, IS IN CHARGE OF COMPLETING THE STUDY BY THE END OF 1976.
ENALUF AND THE GON HAD ALSO BEEN NEGOTIATING WITH THE WORLD
BANK FOR FINANCING OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY. DESPITE AN
APPARENT POSITIVE DECISION ON THE PART OF THE WORLD BANK,
ENALUF AND THE GON OPTED IN FAVOR OF THE CANADIAN ARRANGEMENT.

4. THE COPALAR DAM WILL BE A RATHER LARGE PROJECT, WITH
ESTIMATED COSTS WELL IN EXCESS OF US\$100 MILLION, POSSIBLY
APPROACHING US\$200 MILLION. IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE PROJECT
WILL HAVE A GENERATING CAPACITY OF ABOUT 300 MEGAWATTS.

5. ENALUF AND THE GON ARE NOW ACTIVELY SEEKING FINANCING
AND TECHNICAL AID FOR THE ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE PROJECT.
CONTACTS HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN MADE WITH THE WORLD BANK
AND THE CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY.
INTERESTED AMERICAN FIRMS SHOULD BE URGED TO CONTACT:
ING. REMY RENNER
VICE MINISTER -DEVELOPMENT OF THE ATLANTIC COAST
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS
CARRETERA NORTE KM 5
MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

6. WE WILL CONTINUE TO REPORT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND
DETAILS AS THEY BECOME KNOWN.
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